

What Does the Lexile Measure Mean?

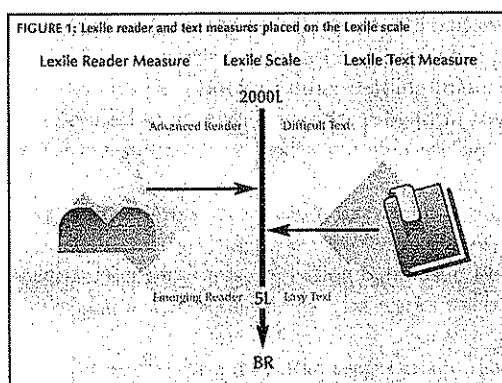


The Lexile Framework for Reading

The Lexile Framework® for Reading is a scientific approach to reading and text measurement. There are two Lexile® measures: the Lexile reader measure and the Lexile text measure. A Lexile reader measure represents a person's reading ability on the Lexile scale. A Lexile text measure represents a text's difficulty level on the Lexile scale. When used together, they can help a reader choose a book or other reading material that is at an appropriate difficulty level. The Lexile reader measure can also be used to monitor a reader's growth in reading ability over time. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the Lexile reader measure and the Lexile text measure on the Lexile scale.

A higher Lexile reader measure represents a higher level of reading ability on the Lexile scale. A Lexile reader measure is usually obtained by having the reader take a test of reading comprehension. There are about two dozen tests that can report Lexile reader measures, including Scholastic Reading Inventory, PASeries Reading, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and many end-of-grade state assessments. The reader's score on the test is reported as a Lexile measure from a low of 0L to a high of 2000L. However, when readers score at or below 0L, a BR (Beginning Reader) code is displayed on their report. A list of the tests and reading programs that report Lexile reader measures can be found at www.lexile.com/readingassessments.

A Lexile text measure, like a Lexile reader measure, is reported on the same Lexile scale, from a low of BR to a high of 2000L. The lower a book's Lexile measure, the easier it will be to comprehend. For example, a text with a Lexile measure of 850L will most likely be easier for a reader to comprehend than a text at 950L. A list of books and their Lexile measures can be found at www.lexile.com/booksearch.

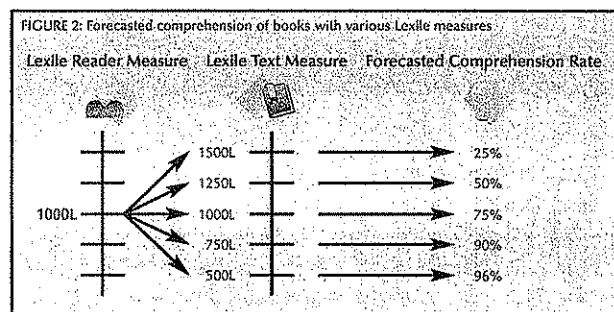


A very useful feature of Lexile reader and text measures is that they can be used together to predict how well a reader will likely comprehend a text at a specific Lexile level. For example, if a reader has a Lexile measure of 1000L, he will be forecasted to comprehend approximately 75 percent of a book with the same Lexile measure (1000L). The 75-percent comprehension rate is called "targeted" reading. This rate is based on independent reading; if the reader receives assistance, the comprehension rate will increase. The target reading rate is the point at which a reader will comprehend enough to understand the text, but will also face some reading challenge. At this challenge point, a reader is not bored by text that is too easy, but also does not experience too much difficulty in understanding. The result is a rewarding reading experience.

In some cases, a reader may not want to choose a book at the 75-percent forecasted comprehension rate. For example, if a reader is highly motivated or very interested in a book's topic, the reader may want to choose a book that will be more challenging (less than 75-percent forecasted comprehension). At other times, the reader may want to choose a book for easy independent reading (90-percent or higher forecasted comprehension). To adjust the forecasted comprehension rate, simply look for a text that has a different Lexile measure than the reader. If the Lexile text measure is higher than the Lexile reader measure, forecasted comprehension goes down. If the Lexile text measure is lower than the Lexile reader measure, forecasted comprehension goes up. For example, if a reader wants to read a book independently at a 90-percent comprehension rate, she can simply choose a book with a Lexile measure approximately 250L below her Lexile reader measure. A reader with a measure of 1000L would choose a book with a measure around 750L. Figure 2 (on the following page) shows how changing the Lexile text measure changes the forecasted comprehension rate.

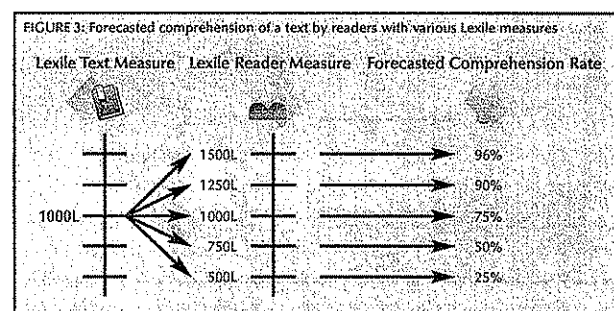
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or visit www.Lexile.com.

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with little comprehension challenge. It should be noted that material above or below the reader's Lexile range may be used for specific instructional purposes.

It is important to note that the Lexile measure of a book refers only to its text difficulty. A Lexile measure does not address the content or quality of the book. A Lexile measure is based on two strong predictors of how difficult a text is to comprehend: word frequency and sentence length. Many other factors affect the relationship between a reader and a book, including its content, the age and interests of the reader, and the design of the actual book. The Lexile measure is a good starting point in the book-selection process, but these other factors should be considered when making a decision about which book to choose.



In some classroom situations, a textbook is used as the main source of reading material for all students. The reading ability of the students in the class may not be matched well to the text difficulty. This can lead to wide variation in forecasted comprehension rate among students reading the same text (see Figure 3). Reading support can be provided to students whose Lexile reader measures are well below the text's Lexile measure. More challenging readings can be provided for students whose Lexile measures are well above the text's Lexile measure.

A helpful feature of the Lexile scale is that it is a developmental scale. This means it can be used to show whether a reader's reading ability is growing (or developing) over time. For example, a student may take a test in third grade that reports a Lexile measure. If the student takes a test in a later grade that also reports a Lexile measure, she can see whether her reading ability has grown. This feature allows educators and parents to monitor a reader's growth over time. If a student's reading growth is too slow, or even stalled, it may be necessary to provide supplemental reading instruction.

Additional information about Lexile measures can be found at www.Lexile.com.

- To find the Lexile measures of books, or to search for books using a Lexile range, go to www.lexile.com/booksearch. Several search options are available, including title, reader interest categories, author and developmental level.
- A complete list of the tests and reading programs that report Lexile reader measures is available at www.lexile.com/readingassessments.

Although Lexile measures should not be linked directly to grade levels, it is possible to describe the Lexile measures of typical students and textbooks at various grade levels. MetaMetrics collected the Lexile measures for a national sample of students and identified the Lexile measures for the students in the middle 50 percent of the Lexile range (25 percent–75 percent). The results of this study can be found at www.lexile.com/casestudies or by clicking on the *Educators* link from the Lexile home page and selecting *FAQ*.



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